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ABSTRACT

The annotated bibliography is intended to examine the possible role of sociocultural factors on the low achievement and special education placement of limited English proficient (LEP) Hispanic children. Four topic areas are addressed: (1) ethnic differences in teacher-pupil interactions and their relation to achievement; (2) the relationship of sociocultural variables to achievement; (3) the relationship of sociocultural variables to referral for special education; and (4) the influence of sociocultural factors in special education placement. Because of the lack of research on exceptional Hispanic students, articles dealing with Hispanics, Blacks, or handicapped children in general were included. Among conclusions reviewed are that socioeconomic status is a very important positive correlate of achievement for Hispanics and that language minority status is more of a barrier to LEP Hispanics than to other non-English speaking groups. The need for more real-life studies on Hispanic LEP students is stressed. (CL)

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THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS ON THE ACHIEVEMENT AND PLACEMENT OF LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT HISPANIC STUDENTS

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Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
1. Ethnic Differences in Teacher-Pupil Interactions and Their Relation to Achievement	4
2. The Relationship of Sociocultural Variables to Achievement	6
3. The Relationship of Sociocultural Variables to Referral for Special Education	13
4. The Influence of Sociocultural Factors in Special Education Placement	15
Conclusions	24
References	28

Introduction

The overrepresentation of Hispanics in special education classes for the learning disabled (LD) has been well documented (Ortiz and Yates, 1983), as has the exceptionally high dropout rate and low achievement of Hispanics in public schools (Nielsen and Fernandez, 1981). Even with the growth of bilingual education programs specifically earmarked for the limited English proficient (LEP) child, the low achievement and overrepresentation of Hispanics in special education classes continues to do injustice to the human resources of this minority group. With the population and migration explosion now occurring in the Southwestern United States, Hispanics will soon become a majority group in the public schools of Texas. Thus, an urgent need exists to improve the educational attainment of Hispanics and limit their overrepresentation in LD classes.

If special education programs were effective, the issue of representation would be less relevant, as would be the nature-nurture controversy and the marked criticism of "biased" intelligence tests and unfair assessment procedures. Unfortunately, this is not the case and a nationwide moratorium on IQ testing is certainly possible given the numerous class action suits that have been filed.

While assessment practices with minority groups should be evaluated carefully, perhaps too much emphasis has been placed in this area. Matuszek and Oakland (1979) state that before considering the components of an individual assessment program, the factors that potentially might influence placement decisions should be examined. Policies at the federal, state or local school district level, for example, definitely can influence the types of placement decisions that are made. Test results obtained during the

psychoeducational assessment process represent a second factor which often plays a critical role in the placement of a child who has been referred. In addition to IQ test scores and assessment data in general, it is possible that sociocultural variables such as the student's race, sex, appearance, socioeconomic status (SES), language background, etc., also may contribute to placement decisions.

The purpose of this review is to examine the possible role of sociocultural factors on the low achievement and the special education placement of LEP Hispanic children. Articles from the following areas are included in this review:

1. Ethnic differences in teacher-pupil interactions and their relation to achievement,

2. The relationship of sociocultural variables to achievement,

3. The relationship of sociocultural variables to referral for special education,

4. The influence of sociocultural factors in special education placement.

The rationale for including the above areas centers around a series of assumptions. Firstly, teacher-pupil interactions often are qualitatively different for Hispanic students when compared to interactions with Anglo students (Jackson and Cosca, 1974; Laosa, 1979). In Jackson and Cosca's study, Hispanics were praised less often than Anglos and their interactions with teachers generally were not of the type that have been associated with gain in achievement. Secondly, the relationship of certain sociocultural variables such as SES and ethnicity to school achievement has been investigated in a substantial number of research studies. It would seem important to try to determine which sociocultural factors play the more

important role in their relationship to school achievement for Hispanics. Thirdly, the sociocultural correlates of low achievement may be the same ones which influence the referral and subsequent placement of Hispanics into special education classes. For example, low SES and language minority status may be associated with low achievement; the child may be referred to special education because of this low achievement; low SES and language minority status affect the validity of traditional assessment practices which do not take into account the child's language, culture or past life experiences; and thus, the child is placed in a special education class.

Wherever possible, articles were reviewed that included LEP Hispanic handicapped children as subjects or which at least had implications for this group of children. However, almost no research on this exceptional population could be found. Instead, articles which dealt with Hispanics, Blacks or handicapped children in general, were included. It was not the intention of this reviewer to present an exhaustive and broad review of the literature, but rather to attempt to present a comprehensive view of the relationship of certain sociocultural variables to achievement and to special education placement decisions. Certain areas were not covered or were covered superficially (e.g., cognitive styles, locus of control), but these areas were not considered to be of high priority for inclusion. That is not to say, however, that they should not be included in future searches.

1. Ethnic Differences in Teacher-Pupil Interactions and Their Relation to Achievement

Buriel, R. (1983). Teacher-student interactions and their relationship to student achievement: A comparison of Mexican-American children. Journal of Educational Psychology, 75(6), 889-897.

Very little research exists in the area of teacher-student interactions with Hispanic children. Buriel reviews the relationship between teacher-student interactions and academic achievement with Hispanic children.

A total of 40 Hispanic and 59 Anglo fourth- and fifth-grade children from five randomly selected classrooms participated in the study. Care was taken to ensure that all students were similar in terms of academic achievement, socioeconomic status and English proficiency. Two Anglo males, two Anglo females and one Black female teacher participated in the study. The Brophy-Good Dyadic Interaction Observation System was used to record the interactions. It was found that for Hispanic children only, "correct answers followed by teacher affirmation" correlated positively with academic achievement. Interestingly, Anglo children were more likely to receive positive feedback from teachers but this feedback was not significantly correlated with academic achievement. Thus, although the Hispanics seem to need teacher affirmation more than Anglos, they receive it less frequently. Buriel says that it may be true that only the higher achieving Hispanics receive positive teacher affirmation of their answers while in the case of the Anglos, teacher affirmation is not dependent upon academic achievement.

This study is particularly important because it shows the presence of ethnic group differences in teacher-student interactions even after confounding variables such as socioeconomic status, academic achievement and English proficiency have been considered. Future studies could contribute to the field by including samples of Hispanic teachers who were not included in the current study.

Jackson, G. & Cosca, C. (1974). The inequality of educational opportunity in the Southwest: An observational study of ethnically mixed classrooms. American Educational Research Journal, 11(3), 219-229.

This study assesses teacher-pupil behavior to analyze the quality of educational opportunity available to Anglo and Mexican-American students within the public schools of the Southwestern United States. Rural, urban and suburban schools were included with a total of 429 classrooms being visited in 52 schools. Fourth-, eighth-, tenth- and twelfth-grade classrooms were observed either during language arts or social studies classes. A modified Flanders Interaction Analysis system was used to code teacher-pupil interactions. Previous to actual data collection, inter-rater reliability for the five trained observers was found to be above .85, except in the case of one observer who demonstrated a reliability coefficient of .78. Reliability among observers also was monitored carefully during the data collection

phase. A major question was to determine whether the Mexican-American and Anglo students were equally involved in the different teacher-pupil interactions. A series of tests revealed that significant differences favoring Anglo students occurred on six of the twelve measures of interactions. Included were teacher praise and encouragement of students, teacher acceptance or use of student ideas, teacher questioning, the teacher's giving of positive feedback, all non-criticizing teacher-talk and all student-speaking talk. In all of these cases, Anglo students experienced significantly more of these interactions than did the Mexican-American students ($p<.01$).

Past research has shown great consistency in the relationship between student achievement and teacher behaviors when they include certain forms of praise, the acceptance and use of students' ideas and the questioning of pupils. This study found large and significant disparities in all three of these behaviors. For example, teachers praised or encouraged Anglos 30% more often than they did Mexican Americans and directed 21% more questions to Anglos than to Mexican-Americans. Thus, the Mexican-American students were engaged in less frequent interactions involving teacher behaviors which have been associated with gains in student achievement. In reality, Jackson and Cosca believe that these group differences may be even greater because their sample did not include school districts under investigation for civil rights violations. Furthermore, participating teachers may have altered their behavior towards students because some of them knew that the research that was being conducted had to do with the civil rights of children.

The authors suggest that four factors may be responsible for disparities in the teachers' behavior and the poor academic performance of Mexican-American students: (a) linguistic and cultural differences; (b) the failure of schools to respond to these differences; (c) different teacher behaviors being associated with differences in the racial, SES or achievement characteristics of students; and (d) the failure of teacher education programs to focus on the needs of minority group children. Additional research will have to be conducted in the future, however, in order to confirm the relative importance of the above factors.

Laosa, L. M. (1979). Inequality in the classroom: Observational research on teacher-student interactions. Aztlan, 8, 51-66.

Besides describing the results of his own empirical study, Laosa presents a comprehensive but brief discussion of previous studies. Included in the literature review are studies that deal with the relationship between ethnicity and classroom interactions, socioeconomic status and classroom interactions, academic achievement and classroom interactions, speech characteristics of students and teachers' attitudes, and the schooling attainment of Mexican-Americans and classroom interaction.

In Laosa's study, 14 kindergarten and second-grade bilingual classrooms were selected. Within each classroom three subjects were chosen, one English-dominant Anglo, one Mexican-American and one Spanish-dominant Mexican-American. Much care was taken to match these subjects within

classrooms on sex, occupational status, and reading and mathematics achievement scores. Results showed that both the type of language dominance and ethnicity of students affected classroom interaction to a significant extent, and that these relationships varied, depending upon the grade level that was being studied. The most interesting finding, however, was that the students' language dominance, not ethnicity, was the key factor influencing the teachers' disapproving behavior. English-dominant students, both Anglo and Mexican-American, experienced a decrease in teacher disapproval in second grade as opposed to kindergarten and a decrease in the amount of non-evaluative, substantive academic information received from teachers.

One possible confounding factor in this study concerns the inclusion of paraprofessional teacher aides; better control would have been achieved if only credentialed teachers had been used. A second caution refers to the interpretation of cross-sectional as opposed to longitudinal data. Since Laosa's study was cross-sectional, the kindergarten subjects were not the same children as the second grade subjects. While it is appropriate to infer that the behavior of the subjects would have been comparable if a longitudinal design had been used, this is not always a correct assumption. Nonetheless, this article is of value for the literature review which is presented, and the results of the observational study are extremely interesting and have implications for the education of LEP children in bilingual classrooms.

2. The Relationship of Sociocultural Variables to Achievement

Laosa, L. M. (1977). Socialization, education and continuity: The importance of the sociocultural context. Young Children, 32(5), 21-27.

An important reason for the low academic achievement of Hispanic-Americans may lie in the total sociocultural context of the home which is different from that of the school. Rather than looking at "deficiencies" of minority group children, it is more appropriate to consider the "differences" that exist among distinct ethnic groups and subgroups in various sociocultural contexts.

Laosa discusses several of his own studies which deal with important components of the sociocultural context--maternal teaching strategies and language patterns in the home and in the school. In the first study, two groups of five-year old Mexican-American and Anglo children from similar socioeconomic backgrounds were observed trying to solve perceptual-cognitive and motor problems in the presence of their mothers. While the total number of teaching behaviors emitted by the mothers was the same, there were qualitative differences between the two ethnic groups. Mexican-American mothers engaged in more nonverbal as opposed to verbal interaction and asked fewer questions of their children than did the Anglo mothers. When families from several different levels of SES were compared within ethnic groups, even more significant results were obtained. The interactions of higher SES Mexican-American mothers and children were characterized by a greater number of commands as opposed to questions and a tendency to let the child solve the task without rendering aid.

In the second study, an attempt was made to compare the language patterns of Cuban-American, Mexican-American and Puerto Rican children in the context of the home and school. Interviews were conducted with the mother and teacher of each child. It was found that language use varied considerably, depending upon ethnic subgroup and geographic location. An English-Spanish mixture was the most common home language pattern observed for the Mexican-American group, while the other two groups used Spanish as the main home language. The Puerto Rican group was the only one which does not seem to experience a serious discontinuity in language patterns from home to school.

This article is important in underlining the existence of ethnic as well as SES differences in maternal teaching strategies, and in showing how a discontinuity in language patterns between home and school may differentially affect Hispanic subgroups. The findings are particularly relevant for the limited English proficient handicapped child who must not only cope with a handicapping condition but must also deal with a discontinuity between home and school sociocultural contexts which can affect his ability to achieve in school.

Chan, K. & Rueda, R. (1979). Poverty and culture in education: Separate but equal. Exceptional Children, 45, 422-427.

Since a disproportionate number of minorities also are poor, poverty and culture often are confused and are viewed to be the same concept. Chan and Rueda believe that this is incorrect; instead, the separate effects of poverty and culture upon the educabilty of children should be considered. Low educability may result from poverty indirectly, but it seems to be more directly related to restrictions in health care and the socialization environment of the home. Culture can also affect the educability of young children, especially if there are conflicts due to differences between cultural patterns of the home and those that are required at school.

The ideas presented in this article appear valid and they show how environmental and socialization variables may serve as important factors affecting the educability (and academic achievement) of our nation's children. However, a word of caution should be exercised in the interpretation of the phrase "separate but equal." It should not be concluded that both poverty and culture affect educability to an equal degree. The separate influence of poverty and culture can be suggested from a logical viewpoint but to say that these concepts are of equal importance could only be justified by the use of empirical data.

Nielsen, F. & Fernandez, R. M. (1981). Achievement of Hispanic students in American high schools: Background characteristics and achievement. Chicago: National Opinion Research Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 218 036)

In this technical report, the authors present a large body of data that was obtained from high school seniors and sophomores during the "High School and Beyond" study. The total sample was almost 7,000, and included Mexican Americans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans and "other Latin Americans." A major objective of the study was to describe differences among these Hispanic subgroups on measures of achievement and to determine whether language usage, socioeconomic status and immigration history might help to account for these differences. The relative importance of language use, language proficiency, family socioeconomic status (SES) and length of time living in the United States as determinants in educational attainment was investigated.

Results showed that Hispanics from higher SES groups performed better than those from lower SES groups on several different measures of achievement. This finding is consistent with studies that have found a positive relationship between SES and school achievement. On the other hand, length of residence in the United States was negatively associated with achievement, so that the most recent immigrants tended to do better in school than immigrants who had lived a longer period of time in the United States. A more indepth look at these immigrant groups would have to be carried out in order to determine the reasons for this difference. When all other variables were controlled, being of Cuban origin was more important to achievement than being Mexican-American or Puerto Rican.

The results concerning linguistic factors were some of the most interesting ones. Both English proficiency and Spanish proficiency were positively associated with achievement, even though the data dealt only with English achievement. The authors hypothesize that a high level of Spanish proficiency may be associated with general verbal ability. An important point to consider, however, is that the measure of "language proficiency" may not be very valid nor reliable since students simply were asked to rate on a 1 to 4 scale how well they believed they could speak English and Spanish. A direct test of language proficiency was not performed. In contrast, when they were asked how often they actually speak each language, there was a negative correlation between language usage and achievement. The findings of this study contribute new information to the field and are quite relevant to limited English proficient Hispanic children. The complex role of language was shown through the different results obtained when language proficiency rather than language use was correlated with achievement. However, the instruments used in the study do not have sufficient face validity for unequivocal conclusions to be made. Studies with more rigorous methodologies which investigate the same variables included in this study need to be conducted.

Rosenthal, A. S., Baker, K., & Ginsburg, A. (1983). The effect of language background on achievement level and learning among elementary school students. Sociology of Education, 56, 157-169.

Past studies have indicated that socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity have an important influence on academic achievement. It has also been suggested that language background may hinder achievement as well, but well-controlled studies are lacking. The purpose of the current study was to determine the independent relationship of language background to achievement, while controlling for the confounding effects of socioeconomic status (SES) and ethnicity. Data that had been collected during a nationwide Title I survey were used, with the subjects consisting of randomly selected parents and their 12,322 elementary school children. The sample included subjects from homes in which either Spanish or English were the languages spoken regularly. The exceptionally large number of subjects in this study was a definite advantage for the purposes of data analysis. The authors chose to make a distinction between achievement level and learning in the areas of reading and mathematics. "Achievement level" was defined as the fall semester score obtained on a standardized achievement test, whereas "learning" was defined as the difference score resulting from the subtraction of the fall semester score from the spring semester score.

Duncan's decomposition method was used to analyze the data, with regression estimates being obtained for the interactions and main effects models. Results showed that SES and ethnicity accounted for much of the difference in achievement level between Spanish and English language students. However, even after these variables had been controlled for and adjusted, a small but important language effect was evident. Similar but less significant results also were obtained when learning was used as the dependent variable. The results for both achievement level and learning showed the effect of language background to be stronger for reading than for math. The authors concluded that both nonlanguage characteristics and language background variables should be considered when selecting students for special language programs. They point out that when school personnel consider only one of the above variables, they are in danger of misclassifying children. Low academic achievement may be caused by a variety of factors which are not always considered.

The implications of this article are important for limited English proficient Hispanic children. The misclassification of children which allegedly occurs during the special education placement process may occur, at least in part, because of an inability of teachers to accomodate to variables such as SES and language background when planning the child's educational program. Low achievement then results in special education placement. The study is not without its limitations, however. The measurement of the children's home language background was only approximate, since actual language proficiency in Spanish and English was not measured. A better understanding of the relationship of language to achievement might be obtained through the use of more exact language proficiency instruments. Another limitation is that this study uses achievement test scores in English, but not in Spanish. It is not at all surprising, then, that an inverse relationship exists between the extent of Spanish home background and achievement level. Rather than concluding that parents should use more English at home, a

stronger case for native language education or bilingual education could have been made.

Steinberg, L., Blinde, P. L. & Chan, K. S. (1984). Dropping out among language minority youth. Review of Educational Research, 54(1), 113-132.

Although it does not treat the limited English proficient (LEP) exceptional elementary student directly, this excellent review article has definite implications for understanding the low achievement level and dropout rate of Spanish-speaking children. The article begins with an explanation of the large number of language minority children, mostly Hispanics, who drop out of school. Although there have been many studies that have used Hispanic groups, not enough differentiation has been made among subgroups such as Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, Central Americans, etc. These subgroups may appear quite different, for example, in level of cultural adjustment, English language acquisition and educational achievement. Whereas the dropout rate for Blacks has decreased steadily in recent years, the Hispanic dropout rate increased from 30% to 40% from 1974 to 1979. Bureau of Census data from 1976 showed that individuals from non-English language backgrounds in general and individuals of Hispanic origin tended to drop out at a much higher rate than the general population. This study also found that for reasons unknown, non-English speaking children of Hispanic origin experienced more than twice the dropout rate of non-English speaking children of non-Hispanic origin.

There were many other areas covered in this review. The relationship of background factors (e.g., socioeconomic status [SES], numbers of siblings, etc.), academic achievement and school characteristics to dropping out of school all were discussed. A detailed view of the relationship between language minority status and factors related to dropping out was presented. Some of the most important findings included the following: By far the most important predictor of dropping out was SES, followed by Hispanic origin and early academic failure; a student's English language usage was found to be a much better predictor of school completion than the language usage characteristics of the student's family; language minority Hispanics dropped out more frequently and attained lower level of achievement than students of other language minority groups; and cognitive deficiencies did not appear to be cause of this lower academic achievement.

It was particularly perplexing to find that language minority status was more of a barrier for Hispanics than it was for other language minority groups. The authors proposed several possible alternative explanations, but they concluded that more research would have to conducted. The field is in dire need of studies which control and study the variables of SES, ethnicity, language minority status and time of arrival in the United States.

Anderson, J. G. & Johnson, W. H. (1971). Stability and change among three generations of Mexican-Americans: Factors affecting achievement. American Educational Research Journal, 8(2), 285-309.

This article reports a study conducted in a southwestern Mexican-American community with 163 families of public school children. These families were broken down into seven distinct experimental groups of Anglos and Mexican-Americans who were stratified by nationality and by generation. The main objective of the study was to determine the importance of specific factors affecting achievement in school of Mexican-Americans across three generations. Past studies are reviewed and the results summarized although it should be noted that almost all of these studies are very outdated. Nonetheless, the authors conclude from these studies that the home environment is of central interest in the study of school achievement. Specific variables related to the home environment, and examined in the current study, are the following: (a) patterns of language usage among members of the family, (b) nature of achievement values held by parents, (c) degree of achievement press experienced by the child, (d) parental educational levels, and (e) occupational status of father.

A total of 30 items that were part of a student questionnaire served as one of the main data sources for the study. Factor analysis resulted in q factors of achievement motivation, which when considered with other demographic variables, yielded a total of 14 variables. The authors performed a series of planned comparisons on each of the 14 variables, using the seven experimental groups. It is curious, however, that they do not explain the theoretical rationale for conducting these 84 analyses, and while it is true that planned comparisons are more powerful than post hoc analyses, they should be used sparingly; otherwise, the probability of Type I error increases greatly. Thus, these results should be viewed with caution.

It is interesting to find that increased usage of English across generations is associated with better job opportunities for Mexican-American males, even if level of education remains relatively low. Yet, a large number of Mexican-American families, mostly of low socioeconomic status (SES), continue to use Spanish as the main language of the home, even after three generations. The Mexican-American groups report as much parental pressure to achieve as do Anglo groups. The level of educational aspirations that parents have for their children are equally high in all groups, and this goes against the common belief that Mexican-American parents hold relatively low educational aspirations for their children.

Other analyses were conducted using step-wise regression to determine which of seven independent variables were the best predictors of school achievement. In the case of English reading, the best predictor was self-concept of ability, followed by sex, father's education and language usage in the home. Once again, the use of stepwise regression in this case may not be the best option. If it is true that the variables were chosen because of their relative importance in past studies, hierarchical regression would have been more useful. In any event, stepwise regression is affected by fluctuations in samples, which can change the ranking of the independent variables (predictors).

In conclusion, although results should be viewed with caution, this study is important in stressing the complexity of the factors which may affect academic achievement. Family characteristics such as SES, language of the home, etc., may have a significant impact upon the academic achievement of both LEP and non-LEP Mexican-American children.

Valencia, R. R., Henderson, R. W., & Rankin, R. J. (1981). Relationship of family constellation and schooling to intellectual performance of Mexican-American children. Journal of Educational Psychology, 73(4), 524-532.

The main objective of this study was to determine which of 13 family constellation and sociocultural variables served as the best predictors of intellectual performance for 190 low socioeconomic status (SES) Mexican-American preschool children, using the McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities as the dependent variable. The use of factor analysis was instrumental in reducing the 13 original variables into 4 separate factors which were labeled as follows: (a) language/schooling, (b) socioeconomic status, (c) family size, and (d) sex. These four factors were able to predict 74% of the variance in the predictors of family variables. The language/schooling factor had its highest loadings on the variables of language of the test, family language, years of schooling for the parents and country of parents' schooling. The SES factor had highest loadings on social position score and social class, while the family size factor demonstrated highest loading on size of family and position in family. According to the authors, the fourth factor of sex was more difficult to interpret.

The best regression equation for predicting intellectual performance included the first three factors as the best predictor variables. The authors state that the most competent children, according to the McCarthy Scales, were those who came from English dominant homes, were tested in English rather than in Spanish, and had parents who were educated in the United States with a relatively high level of education.

One limitation of the study is that a wide range in SES was not obtained since all of the families were poor. Even so, however, differences in SES were associated with different levels of intellectual performance. The results of this study are interesting because both SES and language/schooling (cultural) variables contributed to intellectual performance in a separate manner. In addition, family size and birth order contributed to intellectual performance, to a much lesser extent than did SES and language/schooling variables.

It should be noted that Spanish dominant limited English proficient (LEP) children generally did not show as high a level of competence on the McCarthy Scales as did the non-LEP children, but the possibility of cultural bias of test items cannot be ruled out. Notwithstanding, this article represents a significant contribution to the understanding of how sociocultural variables might affect the academic achievement of the LEP handicapped Hispanic child.

3. The Relationship of Sociocultural Variables to Referral for Special Education

Bickel, W. E. (1982). Classifying mentally retarded students: A review of placement practices in special education. In K. A. Heller, W. H. Holtzman, & S. Messick (Eds.), Placing children in special education: A strategy for equity (pp. 182-229). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

This recent book is an excellent one for all special educators to read. Many of its chapters have included sections dealing specifically with handicapped minority students. Bickel's chapter, although directed toward mentally retarded students, is relevant for students of other handicapping conditions as well. A main objective of the chapter is to present a review of recent placement practices that have been implemented since the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142). A total of six sections are included in the chapter. The first section deals with several placement models that have been proposed by educators and professionals. Subsequent sections are concerned with empirical research in which referral and screening processes, evaluation, individual educational plans and least restrictive environments, and parental involvement and due process procedures all are investigated. A final section summarizes the major findings and trends in research dealing with placement and minority representation in special education. There is a definite focus on minority group students, especially in placement practices directly related to minority representation.

According to the review, teachers are still the most important sources of referrals, but other individuals such as parents and other school personnel are beginning to have more input in the referral process. Lower socioeconomic (SES) children are referred more often than higher SES children. There is a tendency for the number of referrals in a school district to depend upon the availability of specific programs, and minority students are referred more frequently than Anglos. A teacher's report of academic achievement can have a substantial effect upon placement decisions. Sociocultural factors such as race, SES, and sex are not influential by themselves in determining special education placement, but the correlation among SES, race, and test scores shows a pattern of higher placement for minority students. According to Bickel, referral information and information about achievement are critical to the placement process. The studies which deal with the influence of student (sociocultural) characteristics on the assessment process and placement were simulated studies, and additional "real world" studies should be conducted before making any conclusions in this area. Overall, this chapter presents a good review of placement practices, and its conclusions have direct relevance for the education of LEP handicapped Hispanics.

Low, B. & Clement, P. (1982). Relationships of race and socioeconomic status to classroom behavior, academic achievement, and referral for special education. Journal of School Psychology, 20(2), 103-111.

This study attempts to determine whether or not there are differences in academic achievement and observed classroom behavior among Anglos, Blacks and Hispanics of different socioeconomic backgrounds. It also examines the utility of race, SES and observed classroom behavior as predictors of referrals to special education.

A total of 109 fourth-grade males from 8 public schools participated in the study. As the authors note, the variable of SES may be somewhat attenuated, since more than 1/3 of all families in the district send their children to private schools. Thus, to be included in the upper SES category for purposes of the study, family incomes only had to be $14,000 or more. Overall, however, the authors do an excellent job of controlling potentially confounding variables, and they seem to be aware of any limitations to their study.

When comparisons were made in academic reading achievement, Anglos fared better than Hispanics or Blacks, and middle and upper SES groups fared better than lower SES groups. The observed classroom behavior of all groups was remarkably similar. Previous studies that had employed teacher ratings rather than actual student behavior had reported significant differences among ethnic groups, but that was not the case for this study. In predicting referral to special education, an adequate prediction was not possible when only race, SES and observed classroom behaviors were used. The authors point out that if it had been possible to include achievement data as a predictor, a better model might have been obtained.

A major conclusion of the study is that charges of "institutional racism" that have been aimed at the school district probably have no basis for existence. But they should be careful in making such a statement since all 12 children who were referred to special education happened to be fourth grade boys and they were all learning disabled. It is possible that if any racist placement policies exist they may exist at lower grade levels and for categories other than LD. For example, this study does not deal with girls, nor does it deal with second-grade mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed students. It also does not control the language proficiency of the Hispanics. In summary, the results leave a number of questions unanswered but the authors have conducted high-quality research. Racial and SES differences in the level of academic achievement both were evident.

4. The Influence of Sociocultural Factors in Special Education Placement

Lanier, J. & Wittmer, J. (1977). Teacher prejudice in referral of students to EMR programs. The School Counselor, 24(3), 165-170.

The large overrepresentation of Blacks in Florida educable mentally retarded (EMR) classes justified a review to determine how criteria were being used to identify these students. A total of 359 Black and White teachers were selected for this study, with proportionate numbers of each being similar to the ratio of Black to White teachers in the county where data collection took place. Unfortuately, the authors did not describe the exact sampling procedures used. One of the main questions of this study was to determine the effect of student race, sex, socioeconomic status (SES) and classroom behavior on teacher referral to EMR classes. Secondary questions included the effect of these variables on the choice of other interventions such as requesting parent-teacher conferences, referral to a counselor or making no intervention. The teachers read 1 of 16 contrived case studies which varied on student characteristics but were similar in other respects such as intelligence test scores and achievement test scores. They rated on a Likert type scale the extent to which they would be likely to select each of the five intervention strategies mentioned above. An analysis of variance was used to test main and interaction effects.

The most striking result was that significantly more Black students were "referred" to EMR classes. Contrary to expectations, Black teachers referred Black students to these classes as frequently as did white teachers. Other significant findings included the following: Teachers tended to request more parent conferences for White than for Black students, and they referred more uncooperative students than cooperative students to a school counselor. The authors conclude that racial prejudice is responsible for the disproportionate number of referrals of Blacks to EMR classes.

Unfortunately, this article is poorly written. Hypotheses are not explicitly stated, the independent variables manipulated in the design are not clear and inconsistencies appear in the text. No statistical tables are offered, making it very difficult for the reader to interpret the results. Nonetheless, this article does suggest that sociocultural variables such as race of student may be important in the assessment/placement process. Although the study did not include Hispanic case studies, Florida is becoming increasingly populated with Hispanics. If certain sociocultural variables prove important to consider in the case of Blacks, similar variables could also be operating in the case of Hispanics as well, with implications for the limited English proficient handicapped child.

Zucker, S. H., Prieto, A. G. & Rutherford, Jr., R. B. (1979). Racial determinants of teacher's perceptions of placement of the educable mentally retarded. Paper presented at the meeting of the Council for Exceptional Children, Dallas, TX. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 171 015)

According to Zucker, et al., research studies have shown that student characteristics such as sex, race, socioeconomic status, speech, labels and personality affect teacher expectations. They state that these expectations are caused by student behavior but no evidence is provided to support this statement. One study in a different area dealt with the variable of physical attractiveness in which it was reported that teachers were biased in their willingness to place unattractive children in special education classes.

The current study examined the variables of sex and race as sources of bias in teacher recommendations for placement in classes for the educable mentally retarded (EMR). The sample consisted of 180 second- and third-grade teachers randomly selected from a southwestern metropolitan area. Only 10% of the teachers had taken any special education courses in college and 95% of the teachers were Anglo. All subjects were presented with a contrived case study of a child who was functioning slightly below grade level but for whom no justification for special class placement was evident. The variables of sex and race were examined in a 2 x 2 analysis of variance, with subjects being assigned to one of four treatment conditions as follows: white male, white female, Mexican-American male, Mexican-American female. Although neither the sex main effect nor the race x sex interaction were significant, the main effect for race was highly significant, and showed that the teachers rated EMR classes as being more appropriate for the Mexican-American cases than for Anglo cases. Possible explanations for this finding include teacher ethnocentricism, social class stereotyping or social dominance theory in which the majority group maintains a negative attitude towards the minority group.

The main implication emerging from the study was that teacher bias in placement decisions for minority group students should be checked through due process. The results of this study are particularly relevant to bilingual exceptional children because of the focus on the Mexican-American child. Limitations of the study include the contrived nature of the case study and the limited generalizability of the results to other non-Anglo teachers such as Hispanics. It would have been interesting to see how school psychologists would have reacted to the case study since they continue to maintain the traditional role of "gatekeeper" in the arena of special education placement.

Argulewicz, E. N. (1983). Effects of ethnic membership, socioeconomic status, and home language on LD, EMR, and EH placements. Learning Disability Quarterly, 6(2), 195-200.

The incidence and type of special education placements for low and mid-high socioeconomic status Blacks, Anglos and Hispanics were examined; for the Hispanic group only, type of home language was also examined. A major reason for conducting the study was the ongoing controversy of minority overrepresentation in special education. It was hoped that the data to be

obtained would provide additional information concerning the contribution of the above factors to special education placement.

A total of 9,950 children enrolled in kindergarten through the sixth grade in a southwestern school district in the United States served as subjects. The data were analyzed through the use of linear models, with the dependent variable being the probability of special education placement. Although a significant main effect was not found for SES, both a significant effect for ethnicity and a significant ethnicity x SES interaction were evident ($p<.05$). Scheffe's post hoc test showed that mid-high SES Hispanics who were Spanish-speaking had a significantly higher probability of being placed in special education class than did the other groups. Hispanics of both levels of SES were more likely to be placed in special education than were Anglos and mid-high level Blacks. The LD category was the most commonly assigned category for all ethnic groups and Hispanics were slightly overrepresented in this category when compared with other ethnic groups. This is a most interesting finding, since Ortiz and Yates (1983) also had noted an overrepresentation of LD Hispanics in Texas, whereas the current study was conducted in Arizona.

The author points out that cultural/linguistic variables were more important in the current study than the commonly reported variable of SES. Thus, they should be included in future studies. Unfortunately, it is difficult to interpret the underlying processes that are occurring in the placement process because of the study's descriptive nature. This is not to belittle the study, since its real-life results do offer intriguing possibilities. However, cause and effect relationships have not been tested, and the results can do little more than suggest additional research questions to be investigated. The fact that Hispanic children were viewed as a heterogeneous group (different home language, different SES) was important in the study because an intersection was found between ethnicity and SES, with Spanish-speaking Hispanics from mid-high SES level being most likely to be placed in special education. This finding is interesting, since the author notes that in one of his recent studies conducted in the same schools, it was found that low SES Hispanics were referred more frequently to special education than other low SES groups. The author concludes that the overrepresentation of the mid-high SES Hispanic group occurred during the assessment/placement stage rather than at the time of referral. One possibility is that the mid-high SES schools are lacking in alternative programs such as bilingual education and English as a Second Language (ESL). Without alternative programs, the children are placed in special education. The results of this study are especially relevant to placement decisions regarding LEP and other minority students currently served by our public schools.

Ysseldyke, J. E., & Algozzine, B. (1981). Diagnostic classification decisions as a function of referral information. Journal of Special Education, 13(4), 429-435.

Past research has suggested that teachers' attitudes towards children are influenced by a child's sex, race, socioeconomic status (SES), physical

appearance, behavior and other factors. The authors wanted to see if some of these factors would be important also in influencing classification decisions. This study sought to examine the effect of pre-assessment data at the time of referral in influencing the special education classification decisions made by school personnel.

A total of 224 school professionals from both public and private schools participated in the study. Teachers, administrators, and support personnel who customarily participate in the special education decision-making process all were included as subjects in this simulated experiment. They each read 1 of 16 simulated case studies in which the independent variables of sex, SES, degree of attractiveness and type of referral problem were varied. While the case studies varied on the above characteristics, objective test data was held constant and showed all students to be functioning within the average range. Differences in classification decisions would then have to reflect bias from one or more of the above subjective factors, since test data suggested average functioning.

Each subject, in addition to classifying the child, was to rate the likelihood of that child being learning disabled (LD), mentally retarded (MR) or emotionally disturbed (ED) (1 = very likely to 5 = very unlikely). Overall, most subjects found the child to be LD, with the least likely category being that of MR. The subjective characteristics of the child were important only for the category of ED, where it was found that when the type of problem at referral was behavioral in nature, subjects were more likely to categorize the child as ED than when the problem was academic. The authors concluded that the decisions were influenced, at least in part, by the characteristics of the child as presented in the different case studies. It had been expected, however, that these characteristics would have played a more important role in the differential diagnosis of MR and LD, but this was true only for ED when the type of problem was behavioral. The other independent variables of sex, SES and degree of attractiveness did not show a significant effect.

It is not surprising that LD was the most common category selected, since test data was within the normal range. It would have been interesting to see how the decision-makers would have responded to more discrepant test data. In addition, one limitation of the study concerns the simulated conditions under which it was conducted, since results might not generalize to a real-life setting. Another limitation is addressed in the study's design. Subjects apparently were not given the alternative of "no classification" since all of the decisions involved special education categories. Since test data was within the normal range, it would be expected that if they had been given the opportunity, many decisions might have resulted in no special education classification at all. Despite its limitations, this study suggests that decision-makers may be influenced in some cases by subjective characteristics other than objective test data. The question remains to be answered concerning whether certain characteristics of limited English proficient children (ethnicity, language, SES, etc.) can influence the decision-making process.

Matusek, P., & Oakland, T. (1979). Factors influencing teachers' and psychologists' recommendations regarding special class placement. Journal of School Psychology, 17(2), 116-125.

The need to determine first which factors may influence placement decisions before determining the components of an individual assessment program was stated as a reason for the current research. The study sought to answer a variety of questions such as: Which are the relevant child characteristics that teachers and psychologists use in making placement decisions? Do differences exist between teachers and psychologists in the types of characteristics to which they attach importance? Do racial and SES characteristics influence placement decisions independent of other characteristics? The authors chose 16 variables for study, all of which had been identified by either governmental agencies or the professional literature as being potentially important factors in placement decisions. Different combinations and levels of these 16 variables were used to develop 106 simulated child case studies. Some of these variables included: ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES), language, values, adaptive behavior, IQ, class achievement, etc. Considerable effort was made to ensure that these case studies appeared authentic and that teachers and psychologists would be able to interpret correctly their content. Each subject was asked to read 10 or 11 of these cases and recommend one of 5 alternative placements which ranged from a regular class setting to a full-time special class or school setting. Subjects were not asked to assign special education labels to these children. Data were analyzed using a linear model technique so that the effect of each individual variable could be studied.

Results showed that psychologists in the study did not recommend placements according to race per se, but used objective IQ and achievement data in making their decisions. Since minority children tend to score low on standardized tests, the authors believe that these scores influence psychologists' decisions in real-life settings, but that overt discrimination based on race does not occur. Unexpectedly, psychologists recommended a greater number of special class placements for the higher SES group than for the lower SES group. The authors hypothesize that one explanation for this result is that psychologists tend to view problems of higher class children as being internal to the children whereas the problems of lower class children are environmentally caused. In the case of other variables that were thought to be important, such as adaptive behavior, interpersonal relationships, language preference, and different value systems of the home, school and community, psychologists did not use information from these variables in making their decisions. Teachers placed children in a similar manner as did the psychologists, with several exceptions. SES was not an important factor in their decisions, but level of adaptive behavior and self-concept were more important. There was also a nonsignificant trend for teachers to recommend more special class placements for children from nonstandard language backgrounds. Design considerations appear to have been met adequately in this study, although in order to maintain equivalent conditions, it would have been better if the experimenter had met with both groups of subjects to explain the study. Instead, materials were given to teachers at a faculty meeting and they were mailed to the psychologists. This study did not deal specifically with LEP or Hispanic children, but the results nonetheless could have implications for their special class placement.

Ysseldyke, J., Algozzine, B., Regan, R., & McGue, M. (1981). The influence of test scores and naturally-occurring pupil characteristics on psychoeducational decision making with children. Journal of School Psychology, 19(2), 167-177.

The specific research questions addressed in this study attempted to determine which types of assessment data psychologists and other school personnel would use as a function of pupil sex, socioeconomic status (SES), appearance and type of problem; the extent to which these pupil characteristics biased their decisions; and the extent to which they perceived several types of assessment data and naturally-occurring pupil characteristics as having influenced their decisions.

A total of 159 school psychologists and educators read a simulated case study in which the variables of pupil sex, SES, type of referral problem and degree of attractiveness were varied. A computer program permitted the subjects to access information which provided the results from different assessment instruments. Regardless of the instruments selected, the computer program consistently informed the subjects that scores fell within the average range. A series of Likert scale questions then were administered to the subjects to determine the predictions that they had made as well as the factors that they believed were the most important in influencing their predictions. Multivariate analyses of variance were performed on the data, with univariate analyses being performed for significant multivariate effects.

Results showed that of seven different types of assessment data provided, intelligence tests and achievement tests were used the most frequently and adaptive behavior measures were used the least frequently. The case study was more likely to be rated "emotionally disturbed" if the referral problem was described as behavioral in nature as opposed to academic. Subjects did not perceive different pupil characteristics and referral information as significantly influencing the importance that they had attached to the assessment instruments. Scores on achievement tests, intelligence tests, and any discrepancy existing between the two of them were perceived as being significantly more influential than other types of data. The type of referral problem (behavior or academic) was perceived as significantly more influential than were the pupil characteristics, with SES and attractiveness being significantly more influential than was sex. Interestingly, subjects rated SES as having significantly more influence when the pupil was described as being from a higher SES background than from a lower SES background.

This study confirms that intelligence and achievement tests represent the main data source used in making placement decisions, but that referral information and naturally-occurring pupil characteristics, especially SES, may be influential as well. It is especially disturbing to the authors that the reason for referral should be influential in outcome decisions and they point out that the process of assessment should do more than confirm eligibility for special education. Additional research directed more towards minority students and limited English proficient students would be valuable in further investigating the possible effects of naturally-occurring pupil characteristics on outcome decisions.

Amira, S., Abramowitz, S. I., & Jomes-Schwartz, B. (1977). Socially-charged pupil and psychologist effects on psychoeducational decisions. The Journal of Special Education, 11(4), 433-440.

The principal research question of this study was to see if the student characteristics of race and socioeconomic status would influence the placement decisions made by school psychologists; a secondary question of interest was to see if psychologists' values and amount of experience would serve as moderator values. A total of 217 psychologists, all members of the American Psychological Association, participated in the study. They read one of four case studies in which information such as IQ, achievement test scores and family background was always identical, with variations occurring for the independent variables of sex (male or female) and race (Black or White). The psychologists rated the case study as to the appropriateness of either placing the child in a regular school with custodial care, a separate school with custodial care, specialized-intensive instruction in either a regular school or a separate school, or providing no special program. In addition, they completed the New Left Scale which measures values dealing with traditional moralism. The full design examined four independent variables (student race, student sex, psychologists' values, psychologists' experiences) and a four-way analysis of variance was performed separately for each of nine dependent variables. Results indicated a trend towards recommending custodial separate care more strongly for Black than for White children. A major finding was that psychologists who held traditional values judged the middle-class Black child as being more retarded than the lower-class Black child and recommended him more strongly for a custodial program at a separate school.

The authors present a discussion of the results, but methodological considerations limit the interpretation of the findings and subsequent conclusions. First, APA psychologists may not be the most appropriate group for the study, since many of them are doctoral level psychologists who do not participate in special education placement decisions. Master's level psychologists from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) or educational disgnosticians would have constituted a more appropriate sample. Second, the obtained alpha coefficient of only .57 for the instrument used to measure psychologists' values is quite low for internal consistency and could have affected the results. Third, while hypotheses were not specifically stated, an excessive number of F ratios (135) were computed, leading to the possibility that some or all of the significant results may have occurred by chance. It would have been more advisable to have used a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) procedure rather than conducting separate analyses on the dependent variables. Finally, it is not appropriate to discuss trends at the $p < .09$ level as positive findings, especially given the other methodological considerations that have already been mentioned. In spite of these concerns, however, the topic remains a very important one since little is known about bias that allegedly occurs in special placement decisions involving minority group children.

Tomlinson, J. R., Acker, N., Carter, A., & Lindborg, S. (1977). Minority status, sex and school psychological services. Psychology in the Schools, 14(4), 456-460.

This is one of the first studies that had reported the relationship between either minority status or sex of referred students and the nature of psychological services recommended after referral. Minority status in the study was defined as either Black-American, native-American or Oriental. The investigation was conducted in an urban school system with elementary, junior high and high school students. Minority enrollment was at least 10% in the schools selected, with an average of 34% minority enrollment in the district. A total of 355 students referred for psychological services were included in the sample. Data for the study came from school psychologists who had made specific recommendations for each child. Regarding referrals, a significantly higher percentage of the minority student population was referred for psychological services (2.9%) than of the majority student population (1.6%). Minority and majority students did not differ, however, in the types of problems for which they were referred.

Concerning services, school psychologists made significantly more contact with the parents of majority students than with parents of minority students. This was attributed to the greater difficulty in arranging such meetings. A more unexpected finding of this study was that special education resource services were recommended more frequently for minority students, whereas full day special class placement was recommended more frequently for majority students. This finding is consistent with a more recent research study, however, which has shown that special education class placement was recommended more frequently for middle-class as opposed to lower-class Hispanic LEP children. Recommendations to parents of minority students most commonly involved program placement, while recommendations to parents of majority students varied across a variety of alternatives such as program placement, counseling, social groups and self-concept/attitude change.

The authors noted that the schools that had referred the lowest percentage of minority students had been integrated the longest; thus, it is possible that teachers who make referrals of minority students may be acting on bias that decreases as their experience with minority students increases.

Unfortunately, this study did not focus on the extent to which socioeconomic status alone might account for the differences obtained. It is entirely possible that the differences in how school psychologists treated majority and minority group referred children may depend more on social class differences than on ethnicity. It should be important in future studies to separate these two variables in order to study their effects independently. A second limitation of the study concerns the manner in which the authors interpret the sex differences that occurred in referral patterns. A large percentage (68%) of the referrals were males. This finding is consistent with past research which showed evidence that the behavior of males is more deviant and disruptive than that of females in the classroom. The authors raise the question of whether teachers may be failing to refer female students even when it might be appropriate to do so. However, they fail to recognize the existence of sex differences in the occurrence of learning disabilities. Past research in child development has shown evidence of higher rates of mortality,

birth defects, propensity to illness, and learning problems for males in childhood due to less genetic variability of the masculine gender. This could serve as a possible alternative explanation for the sex differences that were obtained. Although this study did not deal directly with Hispanic students, the differences reported between the referral rates and services provided to majority as opposed to minority students are relevant issues to consider with LEP children as well.

Conclusions

A review of relevant literature revealed that very little research has been performed with Hispanics, and even less has been performed with handicapped limited English proficient (LEP) Hispanics. Nonetheless, information obtained from several areas of literature is beginning to accumulate and to enhance our knowledge of the possible relationship between sociocultural variables, achievement and special education class placement.

In the area of ethnic differences in teacher-pupil interactions, Jackson and Cosca's (1974) pioneering study found that Anglos experienced significantly more teacher praise, encouragement, positive feedback and other constructive teacher behaviors than did Hispanics. Since these behaviors generally are associated with gains in achievement, the Hispanics were placed at a disadvantage. More recently, it has been shown that teacher praise is unconditional for Anglo students but contingent upon high academic achievement for Hispanics (Buriel, 1983). The reasons for this ethnic distinction are not known for sure, but a possible explanation can be found in a study by Laosa (1979). In a well-controlled study, Laosa found that a student's language dominance, not ethnicity, was the key factor in influencing a teacher's negative behavior. In either case, the implication is that teachers need to become more accepting of, and attuned to, the needs of these Hispanic children and especially of those who are limited English proficient.

In reviewing the relationship between sociocultural variables and achievement, socioeconomic status (SES) is clearly a very important positive correlate of achievement, and this is true for Hispanic subgroups as well (Nielsen and Fernandez, 1981). In addition, variables such as ethnicity also may be important to consider. Language minority status is particularly

interesting, since it is directly relevant for LEP Hispanic children. Rosenthal, Baker and Ginsburg (1983) found that when SES and ethnicity are controlled, language background still has an influence on or association with academic achievement. In studies of high school students and school attrition, language minority status represents a barrier to non-English-speaking minority groups in general, but is more of a barrier to LEP Hispanics than to other non-English-speaking groups such as Asians (Steinberg, Blinde and Chan, 1984). For reasons unknown, being a LEP Hispanic is more predictive of dropping out of school than for those other groups. Another possible sociocultural variable related to achievement is the type of maternal teaching strategies used in many Hispanic homes, (Laosa, 1977). Both social class and ethnic differences have been found in the use of maternal teaching strategies. It has been hypothesized that a sociocultural discontinuity or inconsistency exists between the types of strategies used in the school and those used at home, with the result being low academic achievement.

The study by Low and Clement (1982) is a transitional one because it attempts to relate race and SES both to achievement and to referrals to special education. Results showed that these two variables were related to achievement, but they did not predict referrals to special education. Perhaps achievement data would have served as a better predictor of special education referrals. This hypothesis appears congruent with Bickel (1982) who concluded that referral information about a student's school achievement, usually provided by a teacher, may be the most influential factor in subsequent placement decisons.

Even if the above statement is true, it is possible that sociocultural factors also have an influence on placement decisions. Zucker, Prieto, and Rutherford (1979) found that in a simulated study teachers rated educable mentally retarded (EMR) classes as being more appropriate for Hispanics than for Anglos. The authors concluded that teacher bias in placement decisions for minority group students should be investigated through due process. Lanier and Wittmer (1977) reported similar findings for Blacks, but their article is difficult to interpret because of ambiguity in the text. In another simulated study, Amira, Abramowitz, and Gomes-Schwartz (1977) reported several trends but the results did not reach statistical significance. More interesting results were obtained, however, in a real-life study with Hispanic subjects, comparing the effects of ethnic membership, SES, and home language on LD, EMR and EH (emotionally handicapped) placements (Argulewicz, 1983). Linguistic variables were more important than SES, and the author concluded that both of them may be important factors that influence special education placements.

Since most of the studies that have dealt with the possible influence of sociocultural factors on special education placement were either methodologically weak, used contrived data or did not include Hispanics, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions relevant to Hispanic LEP children. More research will have to be conducted in this area in the future.

More studies should be conducted in real-life rather than contrived situations so that the results will be more generalizable and will reflect a higher level of external validity. Studies that focus on Hispanic LEP children would provide valuable contributions to the field. It would be especially beneficial to determine the relative influence of teacher referral information regarding achievement; linguistic proficiency and language

minority status; and socioeconomic status as they relate to the special education placement decisions of LEP Hispanic students.

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